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# REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM-SOUTH (RADP-S)

March 2014 Monthly Report



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Monthly Report: March 2014

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## **DISCLAIMER**

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Cover photo: Workers prepare furrow irrigated, raised vegetable beds on the AMTEX demonstration farm. Photo credit USAID/RADP-S.

## ACRONYMS

ABADE	Assistance in Building Afghanistan by Developing Enterprises
ABISC	Amhad Baryaliai Improved Seeds Company
ACE	Agricultural Credit Enhancement Program
ADA	Afghan Development Association
ADF	Agriculture Development Fund
AFE	Action for Enterprise
AGRED	Agriculture Research and Extension Development Program
AMMC	Afghan Management and Marketing Consultants
ANNGO	Afghanistan National Nursery Growers Organization
APPF	Afghan Police Protection Force
ALA	Afghanistan Land Authority
AREDP	Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Program
ATAR	Afghan Trade and Revenue Program
AVA	Afghan Veterinary Association
AVIPA	Afghanistan Vouchers for Increased Production in Agriculture
AWO	Afghan Women's Organization
BVW	Basic Veterinary Worker
CCN	Cooperating Country National
CHA	Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance
CHAMP	Commercial Horticulture and Agriculture Marketing Program
CLIN	Contract Line Item Number
CMOC-S	Civil-Military Operations Center-South
COP	Chief of Party
COR	Contracting Officer Representative
CST	Country Security Team
DAIL	Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock
DCA	Dutch Committee for Afghanistan
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DoWA	Directorate of Women's Affairs
EA	Equal Access
EMMP	Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan
FAIDA	Financial Access for Investing in the Development of Afghanistan
FAIDA Ag	Financial Access for Investing in the Development of Afghanistan's Agribusiness South component
GAD	Gender and Development

GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GLP	Good Livestock Practices
GMP	Good Management Practices
GUC	Grants Under Contract
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
HALC	Hewad Afghanistan Agriculture and Livestock Company
HR	Human Resources
HVC	High Value Crops
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
KFFA	Kandahar Fresh Food Association
KFZ	Kandahar Food Zone
KIP	Key Implementing Partner
LOP	Life of Project
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MT	Metric Ton
NADF	National Agricultural Development Framework
NPP	National Priority Program
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PMU	Project Management Unit
RADP-S	Regional Agricultural Development Program-South
S-RAD	Southern Regional Agricultural Development Program
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SOTF	Special Operations Task Force
SOW	Scope of Work
SPFU	Small Project Facility Uruzgan
SSISCO	Sadaqat-Sahil Improved Seed Company
TOT	Training-of-Trainers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
VFU	Veterinary Field Unit
VSU	Vetting Support Unit
VCF	Value Chain Facilitation

## Section I: Executive Summary

### Program Description

The purpose of the Regional Agriculture Development Program-South (RADP-S) is to improve food and economic security for rural Afghans in the provinces of Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul and Uruzgan provinces. To accomplish this goal, RADP-S focuses on improving the productivity and profitability of the wheat, high value crops, and livestock value chains, while addressing policy, legal and regulatory constraints affecting value chain development. This agricultural development program supports the consolidation of licit economies to fuel sustainable long term economic growth, including providing alternatives to poppy cultivation.

The implementation approach of RADP-S dovetails with Afghan and U.S. government strategies in its focus on advancing food security, regenerating agribusiness, and increasing agriculture sector jobs and incomes. RADP-S aims to strengthen the capacity of producers, associations, traders, and agribusinesses to respond to market demands; facilitate lasting market linkages between value chain actors; and support an enabling environment that allows the private sector to thrive. The program places the Afghan private sector at the forefront of implementation and addresses key crosscutting issues of women's empowerment, agribusiness value chain facilitation, and alternative development in all facets of the program. Embodying USAID's vision for sustainable Afghan-led development, RADP-S lays the foundation for greater and more socially inclusive growth in the agricultural economy.

### March 2014 Program Highlights

During the month of March, RADP-S aggressively positioned itself to roll out implementation of capacity-building activities immediately upon execution of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock and USAID. Employing the expertise of RADP-S' Productivity and Production Unit and the technical specialists of RADP-S' key implementing partners (KIPs), the project drafted a total of 28 capacity-building interventions for the wheat and high value crop value chains. The livestock technical working group additionally developed nine distinct capacity-building interventions in support of RADP-S commercial poultry production activities and strategized rollout of the livestock nutrition and basic veterinary worker (BVW) strengthening programs. Critical discussions also took place regarding the selection criteria of lead farmers who will host demonstration activities for the projects in the districts.

Simultaneously and in collaboration with Productivity and Production Unit activities, the value chain facilitation (VCF) component strengthened and distinguished itself as a distinct and expanding project unit. During the reporting period, RADP-S initiated implementation of Action for Enterprise's recommendations for integrating VCF into the project work plan. For example, RADP-S reconfigured its project staffing to include one expat VCF Unit Advisor, one VCF Manager, and nine VCF Specialists. This new VCF Unit will support the initiatives of market actors from each RADP-S value chain to expand their markets, promote their competitiveness, and develop the products and services they provide to Afghan farmers. The VCF Unit will also provide key insights about the market systems of the targeted value chains to the Productivity and Production Unit, such as end market requirements and opportunities, firms providing high quality inputs which could be promoted during trainings and demonstrations, and information about potential buyers of value chain products.

RADP-S' KIPs the Afghan Development Association and Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance rolled out the Enabling Environment Constraint Survey, developed and designed by the RADP-S Enabling Environment Unit. The survey targeted stakeholders in the projects selected value chains and sub-value chains – wheat, high value crop, dairy and poultry – for the purpose of identifying major enabling environment constraints. In total, the KIPs conducted 405 survey interviews across Kandahar, Zabul, Helmand, and Uruzgan provinces. The survey is ongoing and will be completed in April.

## Section II: Production, Productivity and Training

### Components I, II, III: Wheat, High Value Crops, and Livestock Value Chains

#### *AMTEX Technical Training Facility*

RADP-S continued development of the 4,275 square meter demonstration farm located on the AMTEX compound outside Kandahar City. During the reporting period, staff established the orchard, vineyard, high value vegetable beds, nursery (containing orchard and vineyard crops), and a seedbed for planting hybrid vegetable seed. The farm is irrigated using raised bed furrow and basin methods. RADP-S furthermore assembled two small-scale tractors. One seed drill, one harvester, and two tillers were also put together and attached to the tractors.

The primary purpose of the technical training facility will be to build the capacity of RADP-S key implementing partners (KIPs) – the Afghan Development Association (ADA) and Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (CHA) – in technical skills such as post harvest handling, utilization of greenhouses, field cooling and cold storage and drip, furrow and basin irrigation. Wheat, high value orchard and vineyard crops as well as high value vegetables will also be cultivated and maintained for capacity building and demonstration purposes.

#### *Key Implementing Partners March Workshop*

On March 13, technical specialists from ADA, CHA

### AMTEX Demonstration Farm



Laborers lay out irrigation furrows between the raised beds for vegetable production.



RADP-S Capacity Building Director (right) oversees planting of high value crop seedlings.



Eggplants (planted here) are among RADP-S' selected high value crops.



RADP-S staff assembles a small-scale tractor for demonstrating at AMTEX.

and DCA convened with RADP-S staff at the AMTEX Technical Training Facility to determine the first technical program activities based on the agricultural production calendar. Attendees spent the day collaboratively developing the curricula which will serve as the basis for all capacity-building interventions with a focus on improving productivity in the districts, on the farms, and in village classrooms. Participants divided into technical working groups by value chain (i.e. wheat, high value crop, and livestock) in order to develop capacity-building and demonstration activities. The wheat group initiated development of seven capacity-building interventions covering topics such as pest and disease management, water management, fertilizer application, appropriate harvesting technology, and on-farm storage. The high value crop working group also developed 21 interventions total for high value orchard, vineyard and vegetable crops. The livestock working group – consisting mostly of DCA attendees – discussed the paravet and basic veterinary worker (BVW) selection criteria and process, paravet BVW strengthening program, and livestock nutrition program rollout. They also exchanged ideas regarding how ADA and CHA can add value to DCA activities.

### *Commercial Poultry Production Technical Working Group*

From March 23-27, the RADP-S livestock team hosted a meeting at the AMTEX Technical Training Facility with ADA and CHA's provincial livestock specialists from each of the four targeted provinces. This technical working group convened for the purpose of developing the capacity-building interventions necessary to strengthening the commercial poultry sector in southern Afghanistan. The following nine distinct interventions were drafted over the course of the four days and are currently under review by Productivity and Production Unit Advisor Campbell Dunlop:

- Household Poultry Management
- Existing Commercial Poultry Management
- New Commercial Poultry Management
- Poultry Common Diseases Management (Viral)
- Poultry Common Diseases Management (Bacteria)
- Poultry Common Diseases Management (Protozoon)
- Poultry Common Diseases Management (Metabolic)
- Poultry Common Diseases Management (Parasitic)
- Poultry Common Diseases Management (Vaccination)

The collection and review of capacity-building interventions for the livestock value chain are ongoing and future meetings at the AMTEX Technical Training Facility have been scheduled.

### *High Value Crop Technical Working Group*

The high value crop specialists of ADA and CHA met with RADP-S' high value crop unit at The AMTEX Technical Training Facility on the dates of March 27, 29 and 30. The objective of these meetings was to develop the capacity-building interventions for almonds and stone fruits (i.e. peaches, plums and apricots). An individual capacity-building module was composed for each fruit and contained seven sub-modules: site selection, integrated pest management and weed control, plant nutrition, water management, orchard maintenance, harvest management, and post-harvest management. These modules will be used to build the capacity of lead farmers in order to improve their productivity and production. Collection and review of capacity-building modules for the high value crop value chains are ongoing and future meetings at the AMTEX Technical Training Facility have been scheduled.

## Section III: Value Chain Facilitation

### *Action for Enterprise*

RADP-S engaged Action for Enterprise (AFE) to develop a strategy for incorporating a value chain facilitation (VCF) approach which supports USAID's emphasis on market-led agricultural growth into the project work plan. AFE Executive Director Frank Lusby and Senior Program Manager Scott Merrill represented the Virginia-based nonprofit. The objectives of their assignment included an analysis of the value chain and small and medium enterprise (SME) development plans contained in the RADP-S draft work plan to identify: 1) facilitation tools for addressing weaknesses in the wheat, high value crop and livestock value chains; 2) system bottlenecks in the three value chains; 3) interventions required to address the effective functioning of those markets; and 4) how the VCF approach can be integrated with the existing RADP-S work plan. AFE also assessed how the RADP-S staffing configuration could be adjusted to fill gaps in understanding in order to conduct value chain facilitation activities. On March 9, they hosted a one-day workshop at the AMTEX Technical Training Facility which oriented RADP-S staff in concepts of intervening to improve market systems through facilitation methodologies.

During the month of March, AFE consultants engaged in activities to learn about RADP-S, its partners, and the working environment of southern Afghanistan. This included meeting the KIPs during a full day conference at AMTEX, interviewing project staff, participating in focus group meetings with local businesspeople, and conducting site visits to several local businesses such as the Rahat Nurani Processing Factory (a raisin processor located in Kandahar City).

In their final report, AFE provided the following recommendations:

- Reorganize RADP-S technical staff into two different units – a Productivity and Production Unit and a Value Chain Facilitation Unit – whose work complement each other through regular meetings, information sharing and synergetic activities
- Base the RADP-S VCF Unit's work on an understanding of value chain markets, inter-

### Value Chain Facilitation



**USAID Agriculture Development Officer Todd Flower presents RADP-S Crosscutting Specialist with certificate of completion at Value Chain Development Approach Training.**



**AFE Executive Director, Frank Lusby, facilitates a value chain mapping exercise with RADP-S and KIP staff.**



**RADP-S staff listens intently to VCF orientation facilitated by AFE.**

firm relationships, and the critical constraints that limit the targeted producers' and enterprises' growth and competitiveness

- Identify and promote market-based viable solutions to value chain constraints which result in sustainable impact (i.e. don't depend on continued donor funding) and which don't distort the local market
- Begin implementing the RADP-S VCF strategy by carrying out abbreviated value chain analyses of selected products and supporting markets. Abbreviated analyses should: a) create a map that presents the relevant market actors and their relationships with one another; b) describe value chain governance structures and methods of inter-firm cooperation; c) identify constraints in the areas of market access, input supply, technology/product development, management and organization, policy, finance, and infrastructure; and d) assess the potential and requirements of the end markets and key buyers of the selected value chains.

AFE consultants provided RADP-S staff with instructions for interviewing lead firms, guidelines for value chain mapping, and a sample abbreviated (five page) value chain analysis report – all of which were reviewed in depth with project staff.

RADP-S responded promptly to these recommendations by reconfiguring the RADP-S staffing structure to include a VCF Unit of nine people under the direction of an expatriate VCF Unit Advisor who has already been identified and is pending approval. Over the next couple of months, RADP-S will identify and assess market-based solutions to constraints identified in the abbreviated analyses, develop targeted interventions for selected market-based solutions, and identify lead firms based on the developed interventions.

### *Value Chain Development Approach Training*

Members of the RADP-S Market Development Unit attended the Value Chain Development Approach Training at the Baron on March 25 and 26. ACDI/VOCA Technical Director for USAID's Leveraging Economic Opportunities (LEO) project, Alex Pavlovic, and USAID Agriculture Development Officer Todd Flower delivered the training. RADP-S COR, Freeman Daniels, and USAID/Afghanistan Agriculture Advisor Tom Love were also in attendance.

Participants trained in a systems approach to markets which builds on the value chain approach (i.e. a participatory, stakeholder-driven approach to exploit opportunities for investment and growth in the private sector). Participants learned about the complex interrelationships between market actors, market and household systems, the policy environment, and sociocultural factors such as gender and poverty. RADP-S found the section of the training dedicated to analyses of value chain systems (e.g. determining key drivers, defining effective performance, and identifying relationships within a value chain) particularly useful. Upon returning to Kandahar, RADP-S' Market Development Specialist created value chain maps and analyses of raisins,



fresh grapes, and pomegranates using instruction from the training as part of the abbreviated analyses prescribed by AFE.

## Section IV: Enabling Environment

### *Enabling Environment*

On March 3, KIPs ADA and CHA rolled out the Enabling Environment Constraint Survey, developed and designed by the RADP-S Enabling Environment unit. The survey targeted stakeholders in RADP-S' selected value chains and sub-value chains – wheat, high value crop, dairy and poultry – for the purpose of identifying major enabling environment constraints. During the month of March, ADA staff conducted 301 survey interviews with farmers, traders, associations, cooperatives, enterprise owners, nursery growers and GI/RoA officials in nine total districts across Kandahar, Zabul and Uruzgan provinces. CHA likewise conducted a total of 104 enabling environment constraint surveys in five districts of Helmand province.

To support and expand on the survey data from Kandahar and Helmand provinces, the RADP-S enabling environment unit conducted a series of focus groups which generated more in-depth information about the constraints affecting each province's wheat, high value crop and livestock value chains. Five focus groups were conducted at the AMTEX Technical Training Facility in Kandahar: The first took place March 2 and



**Short Term Enabling Environment Advisor hosts the first of five enabling environment constraint focus groups, March 2.**

included the Enabling Environment Specialist and Wheat Value Chain Advisor from CHA, Action for Enterprise Executive Director Frank Lusby, as well as six individuals representing companies and cooperatives in the wheat, livestock, poultry and watermelon value chains. The four subsequent focus groups took place March 6 and 10, the first focusing solely on the wheat value chain, the next on high value crops, and the final two on livestock. Each focus group was attended by individuals representing enterprises, associations, nurseries, traders, and cooperatives engaged in commercial activities within the RADP-S target value chains. These individuals were mobilized to attend by RADP-S and the KIPs in the process of conducting the constraints survey. Participants shared their experiences with existing value chain constraints affecting production, productivity and commercial activities, as well as their ideas for removing or overcoming these constraints. Three additional focus groups each will be conducted in Zabul and Uruzgan provinces in April.

A comprehensive analysis of the information gleaned from these surveys and focus groups will be completed by the RADP-S Enabling Environment unit in May.

## Section V: Gender

During the month of March, the RADP-S gender unit conducted a number of activities including mapping women's organizations in RADP-S' target provinces, district field visits, meeting with DOWA and other gender development actors, and interviewing female entrepreneurs involved in agribusiness.

On March 18, the gender unit met with ten female entrepreneurs in Kandahar's Arghandab District who are engaged in agribusiness activities. One of the participants at the meeting, Ms. Nargis, heads a women's association named the Enterprise Group which operates by collecting weekly membership dues (20 AFN per woman) that are deposited into a single revolving fund. Fifty women belong to the association and currently use the fund to run businesses in jams, jellies, pickles, vinegars, and pomegranate sauce. Their products are sold at small grocery stores in the Arghandab District Center and at a canteen based at the provincial DOWA office. A few of the members have used the fund to start businesses in dairy processing and poultry production. RADP-S is developing strategies using analyses of market constraints and capacity building activities with associations such as Enterprise Group to advance and strengthen women's integration into Afghanistan's agribusiness sector.

## Section VI: Collaboration with Partners and Stakeholders

### *Fostering Strategic Collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock*

During the reporting period, progress was made towards establishing a Memorandum of Understanding between RADP-S and the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL). RADP-S submitted a revised draft MOU for USAID's consideration on March 28. Per USAID instructions, this draft MOU featured USAID and the MAIL as the principal parties to the agreement. It also contained two annexes: the first covered the formation and operation of a Program Coordination Committee; the second defined RADP-S and MAIL's specific responsibilities regarding the introduction of RADP-S to provincial authorities and the review of RADP-S' performance.

## Section VII: Monitoring and Evaluation

During the reporting period, the M&E Unit continued to oversee the development of the baseline survey. The unit collaborated with subcontractor Afghan Management and Marketing Consultants (AMMC) to develop household and SME survey instruments which were reviewed and approved by USAID. The team also translated, tested, and revised the tools in late March and AMMC will complete the surveys in the target districts in April and May after they train their enumerators. AMMC also provided a rough draft of their secondary baseline report which RADP-S reviewed. AMMC is currently revising the document in accordance with RADP-S' extensive feedback and will submit a new draft to RADP-S in mid-April. The M&E Unit also continued to expand its team to ensure robust geographic coverage and quality control. Project leadership revised the organizational chart to divide responsibility by province and the unit is projected to be fully staffed by the end of April.



**Sabawoon Radio Manager discusses the station's outreach capacity with RADP-S 'Equal Access Communications Manager, March 8 (Lashkar Gah, Helmand).**

## Section VIII: Communications and Outreach

In March, RADP-S partner Equal Access (EA) finalized the questionnaire and survey forms (also translating them into Pashto) which will be used to conduct a communications assessment of

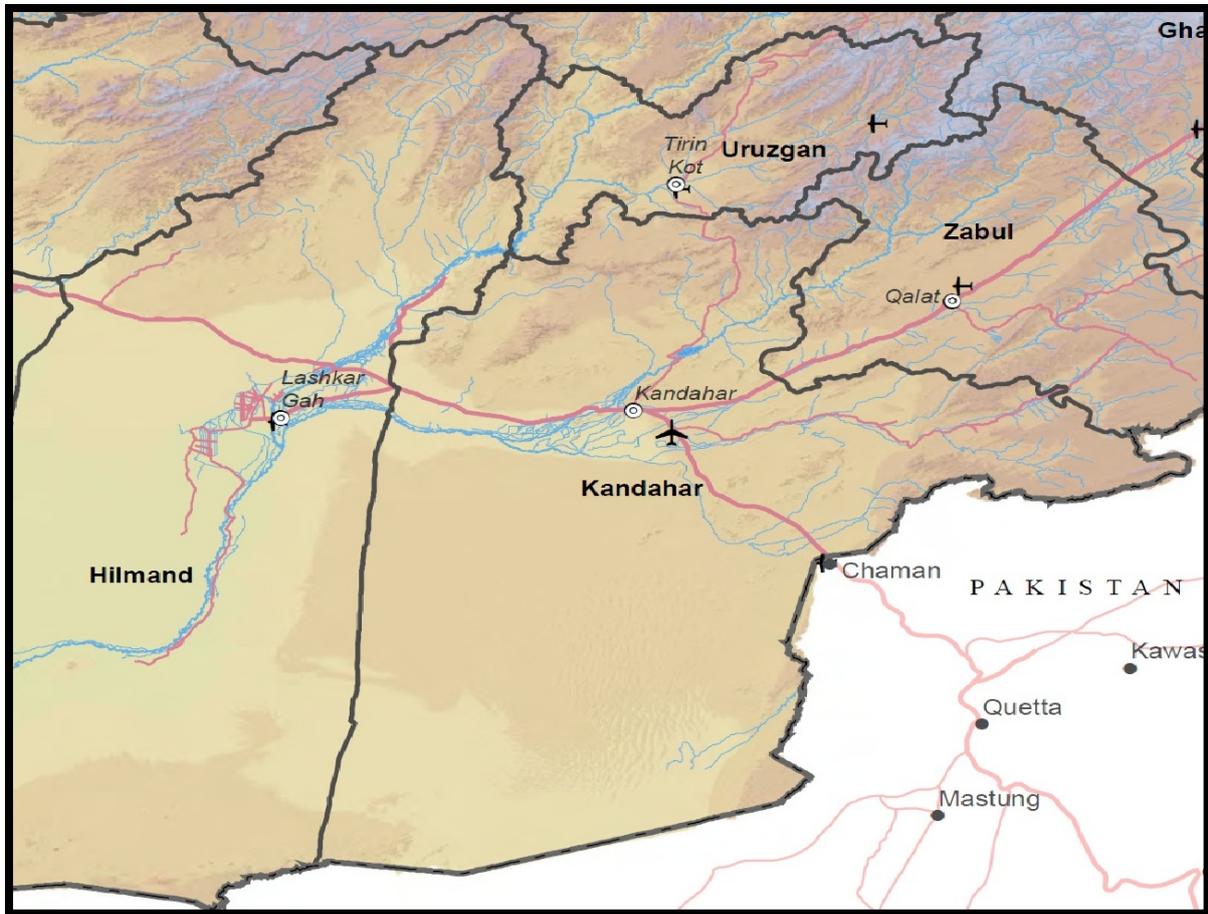
all target provinces once the MoU between RADP-S and MAIL is fully executed. On March 8, RADP-S' EA Communications Manager traveled to Helmand to assess the capacity of Sabawoon Radio and Television to carry out RADP-S outreach activities. After meeting with Director Mirwais Pason, RADP-S determined that Sabawoon – Helmand's first private radio and television station and one of the most popular stations in the region – had adequate coverage across Helmand's districts to serve RADP-S' outreach needs.

During the reporting period, RADP-S' EA Communications Manager in Kandahar participated in the poultry and high value crop technical working groups to provide insight into how strategic communications and outreach tools could enhance program activities. Information from these technical working groups and the upcoming communications assessment will inform and enable the finalization of Equal Access' first year work plan.

## **Section IX: Implementation Challenges**

The lack of an MOU with the MAIL is a significant limitation to program implementation. An endorsement of RADP-S by the MAIL to Provincial and District authorities is needed to enable the KIPs to receive cooperation from local authorities. KIPs have also expressed the necessity to be specifically named in the MOU in order to be permitted by the provincial and district authorities to implement on behalf of RADP-S in the districts.

## ANNEX A: RADP-S Target Provinces



# ANNEX B: Blueprint of AMTEX Technical Training Facility and Demonstration Farm

